

California Teachers of the Year Program for 2005

Application Instructions

(For Use by County Office of Education Candidates)

Seeking highly qualified teachers who represent our state's students and schools

- The page marked "Application Cover Sheet" serves as the top page of the application. Please do not add another top page.
- All format, font, and page length requirements detailed within the application must be observed. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- Directions to the school from the nearest freeway must accompany the application (attach to back of application).
- Semi-finalists whose applications score the highest will receive a site visit late September to mid-October, 2004. Please indicate any day or time constraints September 27 – October 15 that would prevent classroom observation (e.g., school closed, Back-to-School night). Constraints must be listed on top page marked "Application Cover Sheet." Site-visits will be scheduled accordingly. Failure to indicate constraints may result in disqualification.
- If selected as a California Teacher of the Year, the candidate's county office of education will be asked to provide a two-to-three-minute quality video clip on the teacher. He or she may need to be released from classroom duties for up to 30 days in the school year and additional days in years thereafter. If the teacher is selected as a candidate to the National Teacher of the Year Program, the district or county will provide travel reimbursement to the teacher for participation in the National Teacher of the Year meeting. If selected as National Teacher of the Year, the applicant will be released for a full year. The school, district, or other administrative authority employing the applicant will provide substitute personnel and ensure that salary and benefits are not diminished during release time.
- Counties should review applications to ensure maximum quality that properly presents the candidate.
- Counties should review applications to ensure that all instructions have been followed including font, margins, map, day and time constraints, and number of pages. Failure to comply with instructions may result in disqualification.
- Counties will be contacted by September 27, 2004 if candidate is selected to receive a site visit.
- Please mail or hand-deliver 20 copies of the completed application. Copies must be durably stapled, not paper-clipped or rubber-banded.
- All applications must be received (not postmarked) no later than Friday, September 10, 2004 by:

Jerri Morrison, Awards Unit
California Teachers of the Year Program
California Department of Education
Policy and Evaluation Division
1430 N Street, Suite 4206,
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Essays and Letters of Support

California Teachers of the Year are frequently called upon to deliver brief, inspirational messages and to address questions from the media, the public, and peers with answers that are succinct, yet thoughtful and coherent. Therefore, the heart of this application is a set of essays, ranging from one to two pages in length, in which the applicant describes his or her background experiences, professional development, and views about education. Use details and examples to respond to the following requirements.

Format (must be followed or the candidate risks disqualification): Application must be typewritten, using a 12 point Times New Roman font, 1½ spaces between lines, and margins of ¾ inch. Please use the headings indicated below. Essays must be presented in the order indicated, address the essence of questions, and avoid repeating information.

- I. Introductory Letter.** Each application *must include* an introductory letter from the applicant to the selection committee that is **no longer than two pages**. Please:
 - Explain what it is like to be a student in your class;
 - Relate an inspirational vignette that illustrates an important aspect of education; and
 - Include a short example of an ideal *real* day and a less-than-ideal real day in your classroom.
- II. Background Experience and Professional Development Activities.** In list form, (a) provide colleges and universities attended, including postgraduate studies, and dates of attendance and degrees earned; (b) list teaching history with time period, grade level, and subject area of each assignment; (c) list professional memberships, including information regarding offices held and other relevant activities; (d) list staff development activities, mentorships and training of other teachers that you have presented; and (e) list awards and other recognition of your teaching. *Limit: Two pages.*
- III. How Do You Know Your Students Are Achieving?** (assessment methods used, etc.) *Limit: One page.*
- IV. Professional Biography.** What factors influenced your becoming a teacher? Describe your greatest contributions and accomplishments in education. *Limit: Two pages.*
- V. Community Involvement.** Describe partnerships, utilization of resources, and commitment to your community through service-oriented activities, such as volunteer, civic, and other group activities. This could include family involvement, e.g., establishing local partnerships that strengthen family involvement in children's education. Cover community involvement beyond that which is considered basic school-related involvement. Include how you get your students involved in community service. Descriptions should not include your personal family obligations. *Limit: One page.*

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- VI. Philosophy of Teaching.** (A) Describe your personal views about teaching, including what aspects make you an outstanding teacher. (B) Describe the rewards you find in teaching. (C) How are your views about teaching demonstrated in your personal teaching style? *Limit: One page.*
- VII. Education Issues and Trends.** What do you consider to be the two or three biggest issues in public education today? Address one issue in depth, outlining possible causes, effects, and resolutions. *Limit: Two pages.*
- VIII. The Teaching Profession.** (A) Why would you recommend that individuals enter the teaching profession? (B) How do you strengthen and improve the teaching profession? (C) In what ways should teachers be held accountable? *Limit: Two pages.*
- IX. National Teacher of the Year.** If chosen as the Year 2005 National Teacher of the Year, you would serve as a representative and spokesperson for the nation's teaching profession. What would be your message? *Limit: One page.*
- X. Letters of Support.** Please include three letters of support from among the following: superintendent, principal, colleague, student, parent, or civic leader. Please do not include other materials, such as portfolios or press clippings.